UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

Charlottesville Division

SINES, et al.,

Plaintiffs.

diffilis,

vs. : Case No. 3:17-cv-00072-NKM

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KESSLER, et al.,

:

Defendants.

DEFENDANTS MICHAEL HILL, MICHAEL TUBBS, AND LEAGUE OF THE SOUTH'S OPPOSITION TO MOTION TO COMPEL INSPECTION AND ELECTRONIC IMAGING OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES

I. Introduction

Defendants Michael Hill, Michael Tubbs, and League of the South hereby oppose Plaintiffs' Motion to Compel Defendants to Permit Inspection and Imaging of Electronic Devices.

II. Facts

Defendants have provided documents in response to Plaintiffs' discovery requests. At no time have Plaintiffs filed any motion to compel based on any alleged deficiency in Defendants' Responses. Instead, Plaintiffs have filed the instant Motion, arguing that they believe Defendants possess additional responsive communications and that they did not produce the referenced electronic communications in the format requested.

III. Argument

- A. There is No Need for Imaging of Defendants' Devices.
- 1. Plaintiffs Do Not Allege Any Misconduct by Defendants Hill, Tubbs, or League of the South. Defendants Hill, Tubbs, and League of the South Have Not Threatened to Destroy Evidence.

Plaintiffs argue that imaging of Defendants' electronic devices is warranted because "Defendants threatened to destroy and withhold relevant evidence." Yet, although Plaintiffs recite threats by Defendant Parrott to destroy evidence, they do not cite any alleged such threats by Hill, Tubbs, or League of the South.

- B. If the Court Orders Generalized ESI Imaging by a Third-Party Vendor, Plaintiffs Should Bear the Cost.
 - 1. Miscellaneous Factors Bearing on Allocation of Cost
 - a. Plaintiffs' Requests Are Vague and Overbroad.

Various of Plaintiffs' requests are overbroad and vague. See, e.g., Request No. 4 (documents "concerning violence, intimidation or harassment of Person on the basis of race, religion or ethnicity ..."); Request No. 6 ("[a]ll documents concerning and communications concerning or with any Plaintiff or Defendant ...").

b. *Likelihood of Finding Relevant Information*

As argued above, Plaintiffs have not demonstrated that imaging likely will lead to discovery of relevant information. Defendants have provided responses to Plaintiffs discovery requests.

c. Plaintiffs Have Not Made any Showing of Relative Benefit.

Plaintiffs have not made any concrete showing of any tangle benefit to them of thirdparty imaging of Hill, Tubbs, or League of the South's electronic devices. For example, as argued above, Plaintiffs do not even argue that Defendants have threatened to destroy or have destroyed evidence; nor have they demonstrated any likelihood that there is further responsive information.

- d. The Cost of Imaging is Much More Easily Borne by Plaintiffs.
 - 1. Plaintiffs, Whose Case is Being Financed by a Well-Funded Charity, Will Not

Sustain Any Economic Hardship.

Plaintiffs, Defendants believe, are not paying for legal representation. Instead, as stated

in a press release issued on October 12, 2017 by an organization called "Integrity First for

America," this lawsuit is being financed by that organization. And one source of funds that

Integrity First for America uses to finance this lawsuit is on-line contributions by donors.

Thus, there would be no economic hardship imposed on Plaintiffs if the Court did not

impose on Defendants the costs of any third-party imaging.

2. Economic Hardship to Defendants Hill, Tubbs, and League of the SOuth

If Defendants Hill, Tubbs, and League of the South are constrained to pay for

imaging by a third-party vendor, they would have to divert economic resources from

maintaining legal counsel to hiring an information technology (IT) expert whose function

would be to provide Plaintiffs with unnecessary information.

III. Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, the Motion should be denied.

Alternatively, if the Court orders electronic imaging, it should not enter the Stipulation

and Order submitted by Plaintiffs but should make various material modifications to it (which

modifications Defendants will detail at oral argument).

Respectfully submitted,

_/s/ Bryan Jones

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that, on October 16, 2018, I filed the foregoing Opposition with the Clerk of Court through the CM/ECF system, which will send a notice of electronic filing to all counsel of record, including the following:

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I also certify that, on October 16, 2018, I served the following persons with a copy of the foregoing Opposition by mail, first-class, postage-prepaid:

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